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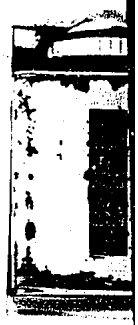

ACADEMIA SINICA CALLS CONFERENCE OF RESEARCH OFFICE CHIEFS TO DISCUSS RELATIONSHIP OF GENERAL LINE TO FUTURE RESEARCH

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[Summary: This report discusses the results of a conference of research office chiefs, called by the Academia Sinica to discuss the relationship of the present general line to future research work. Departments of sciences discussed included: physicomathematical, chemical, biological and geological-geographical, technical, and social.]

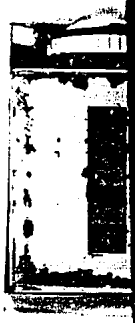
On 14 October 1953, the Academia Sinica opened a bureau directors' conference that included successive meetings of five separate groups, namely: physicomathematical sciences, chemical sciences, biological and geological-geographical sciences, technical sciences, and social sciences. In accordance with the nation's general line during the transitional period, the conference first formulated the research objectives of each group for the next several years and then formulated the important points of research work for 1954.

Chang Chia-fu, Vice-President of the Academia Sinica, gave a report concerning the general line and general duties of the academy during the nation's transitional period. Vice-Presidents T'ao Meng-ho, Chu K'o-chen, and Wu Yu-hsün gave individual reports on the future work direction of each group, and Staff Office Chairman Ch'in Li-sheng gave a report on the Academia Sinica's understanding of the central government's "increase production, practice economy" directive. In his report, Chang Chia-fu called on all men to work actively under the enlightenment of the general line, and stated:

"If the Academia Sinica can gather its present limited resources and apply them to problems the solution of which would make for maximum future development and effective results, then a contribution to the nation will have been made, and it will also show that we clearly comprehend the country's present general line and general duties."

The conference heard reports from each unit concerning the execution of plans for 1953. From these reports, it is estimated that most of the research work for 1953 can be basically completed according to plans. But since the planned advancement of scientific research is still new to our country, the past formulation and execution of research projects continue to pose many problems. For example, the requirements and objectives in some research work were not accurately defined, and there was an inadequate estimate of the requirements that were essential to carry one research work successfully. The experimental plans of some research projects were not realistic. Some units covered too broad a field in their research work, dispersed their resources, and overlooked key points in research activities.

In the process of formulating plans, the work of some units was poorly organized, which caused more confusion. Some field and laboratory work was not well coordinated. Generally speaking, preliminary investigation and research were insufficient. There was insufficient coordination with related groups, for instance, when the botany research office was investigating problems of tangerine growing in a certain mountain area, simultaneously, seven research teams from other organizations were in the same area for the same purpose. The conference stressed the need of striving to set up research plans on a reliable basis, and coordinating research work and establishing a truth seeking spirit in every phase of research.



In accordance with the general line of the country's transitional period and the above reports, the conference discussed the future work, direction, and key points for each unit.

In accordance with the large-scale economic construction now in progress in China, the conference acknowledged that in the future the principal responsibility of workers in the biological and geological-geographical sciences will be to investigate and carry on research studies concerning the country's natural resources, such as the surveying of the Yellow River Basin, which will be one of the most important projects. In addition, they will conduct scientific research to increase the yield per unit of acreage of agricultural harvests and to solve some basic scientific problems in medicine and public health. The conference pointed out that each unit in the biological science field must advance the hitherto neglected study of the theories of Michurin and Pavlov, in order gradually to build up and to advance practical scientific research work.

The importance of chemical research increases daily with the development of the nation's industries. But due to the unequal development of the various segments in chemical research, many important phases still require basic research. The conference acknowledged that it is necessary to establish on the present foundation a fully equipped chemical research agency and thus gradually strengthen some of the weak links of the present department of chemistry. At the same time, the amount and quality of work by each unit should be increased so that they can advance with industrial production. This is especially true with regard to the heavy industries, including fuel, rubber, metallurgy, electrolysis, and other closely connected industries.

The conference pointed out that physicomathematical science is the basis for many sciences and engineering technology and a prerequisite for solving major scientific theoretical problems of national construction. To effectively promote other scientific development and to raise the level of engineering skills, it is necessary to train a sufficient number of scientists who have extensive and practical scientific knowledge and profound understanding of the theories of physics, mathematics, etc. It is necessary to give the young cadres, adequate preparation so that they can confidently grasp the experimental techniques methods.

Due to the industrial backwardness of old China, research in the technical sciences is basically very weak. Generally speaking, the technical science departments of the Academia Sinica, as well as other units, were established after the liberation. According to the conference, it will be the essential responsibility of the various technical science groups to coordinate production in the existing metallurgical industry with the establishment of research work in the new metallurgical industries. As for the construction of other new research institutions, we must at this stage first establish a firm foundation, improve the quality of research, and cooperate with the local factories and mines in advancing basic reconstruction work. At the same time, higher educational schools must cooperate closely with industrial groups in order to raise the scientific technical standards of the cadres.

In the discussion of the social sciences, there was general agreement that each unit is essentially responsible for conscientiously raising the comprehension of research personnel regarding Marxism-Leninism. Each unit must increase the study of Chinese history and further develop study in ancient Chinese history. In the economics field, to achieve the necessary coordination of national economic construction, each unit must initiate the study of the economy of the handicraft industries.

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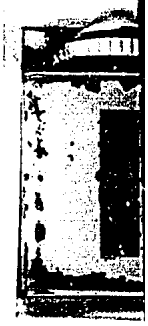

In the discussions on biological and geological-geographical sciences, it was decided that scientific investigation in these three fields must be closely coordinated. Suggestions and requests were submitted by representatives of various industrial groups, and the Academia Sinica has indicated that it will support the work in developing and solving their problems. Beginning in 1954, the Academia Sinica plans to organize comprehensive surveying units to conduct surveying activities in the Northwest and Central-South China Administrative Areas. The principal objective of these activities by the Academia Sinica is to solve important national problems and to develop the most effective way for carrying out scientific studies in China. Each member at the conference willingly agreed to assume his duties.

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